

## CLAIMS

1. A method of operating a host in a network of a plurality of hosts, comprising the steps of:
  - 5 receiving a request to send data to a number of other (“destination”) hosts;  
comparing the number of destination hosts in the request with the value of a parameter;  
if the number of destination hosts is greater than the parameter’s value, inhibiting transmission of at least part of the request;
  - 10 the parameter’s value being reduced with each transmission of a request to a destination host, and incremented with the passage of each time interval in which no requests are transmitted.
2. A method according to claim 1 wherein inhibiting transmission of at least part of  
15 the request comprises the step of diverting at least part of the request to a delay buffer.
3. A method according to claim 2 further comprising the step of transmitting the request in the delay buffer when the value of the parameter is incremented to a value equal to the number of destination hosts identified in the at least part of the request in  
20 the delay buffer.
4. A method according to claim 1 wherein if the number of destination hosts is equal to or less than the value of the parameter, the request is transmitted.
- 25 5. A method according to claim 1 wherein the request is an email specifying multiple recipients.
6. A method according to claim 5 wherein transmission of an email to multiple recipients constitutes transmission of the aforesaid multiple number of requests.  
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7. A method according to claim 1 wherein upon transmission of a request the parameter is reset to zero.

8. A method according to claim 5 wherein the multiple recipient email is processed as a plurality of single recipient emails, and the email is sent to a number of destination hosts equal to the value of the parameter.

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9. A method according to claim 5 wherein the multiple recipient email is processed as a single email.

10. A method according to claim 9 wherein the email is delayed until sufficient time intervals have passed in which no requests are transmitted for the parameter to be equal to the number of requests in the buffer.

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11. A method according to claim 1 wherein the parameter has a predetermined maximum value determined in accordance with a policy.

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12. A method according to claim 1 wherein upon transmission of a request the parameter is decremented by a number equal to the number of transmitted requests.

13. A method according to claim 12 wherein the parameter has a minimum value of zero.

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14. A computing entity adapted to process a request to send an email to multiple recipients by:

comparing the number of recipients in the request with the value of a parameter;  
if the number of recipients is greater than the parameter value, inhibiting  
transmission of the message to at least some of the recipients;  
adjusting the value of the parameter in accordance with a policy by reducing it  
with each transmission of a request to a destination host, and incrementing it with the  
passage of each time interval in which no requests are transmitted.

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15. A computing entity according to claim 14 adapted to send inhibited messages to a buffer.

16. A computing entity according to claim 15 wherein the entity is adapted to transmit a message in the delay buffer when the value of the parameter is incremented to a value equal to the number of recipients identified in messages in the delay buffer.
- 5 17. A computing entity according to claim 14 wherein the entity is one of a server and a client.
18. A network having a plurality of computing entities according to claim 14.
- 10 19. A memory storing computer program adapted for use on a computing entity in a network, the program product being adapted to instruct the entity to:
- compare the number of recipients in the request with the value of a parameter;  
if the number of recipients is greater than the parameter value, inhibit
- 15 transmission of the message to at least some of the recipients; and
- adjust the value of the parameter in accordance with a policy by reducing it with each transmission of a request to a destination host, and incrementing it with the passage of each time interval in which no requests are transmitted.
- 20 20. A memory according to claim 19 wherein the program is arranged to cause the computer entity to store inhibited messages.
21. A memory according to claim 20 wherein the program is arranged to cause the computer entity to transmit a stored message when the value of the parameter is
- 25 incremented to a value equal to the number of recipients identified in inhibited messages which are being stored.